



Pearl in the oyster: Climate change as a mental health opportunity

Author(s): Berry H
Year: 2009
Journal: Australasian Psychiatry : Bulletin of Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists. 17 (6): 453-456

Abstract:

Objective: Our world faces potentially catastrophic climate change and we have limited capacity to adapt to rapid or extreme climatic changes. As a result, we can expect significant adverse impacts on health. This includes mental health, a major and growing global concern. It is essential to understand how to respond quickly, effectively and within a manageable budget. The aim of this paper is to propose that the adverse consequences of climate change might offer a subtle but important mental health promotion opportunity which meets these criteria. **Conclusions:** Climate change will affect mental health directly through increasing exposure to trauma, and indirectly through harming physical health and damaging the physical environment on which economic opportunity depends. Disadvantaged people and communities, especially in rural and remote Australia, will be hardest hit. Seminal work by Alexander Leighton demonstrated how profound disadvantage and associated elevated psychiatric morbidity could be addressed by building community capacity. His methods might be adapted, using the need to address adverse climate change as an opportunity to build social capital. Social capital is associated with a wide range of socioeconomic and health advantages, particularly decreased psychiatric morbidity.

Source: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10398560903045328>

Resource Description

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Unspecified Exposure

Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

Rural

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

Non-United States

Non-United States: Australasia



Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Health Impact: ☒

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Mental Health/Stress

Mental Health Effect/Stress: Mood Disorder

Mitigation/Adaptation: ☒

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Population of Concern: A focus of content

Resource Type: ☒

format or standard characteristic of resource

Review

Timescale: ☒

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

Vulnerability/Impact Assessment: ☒

resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content